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LETTER DATED 20 JUNE 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to Iraq's continuing cooperation with the Special Commission in performing its functions under the relevant Security Council resolutions. Such cooperation was provided with a framework and was strengthened by the signing of the joint statement of 22 June 1996 (S/1997/436, annex, para. 13) and the approval of a joint programme of action, formulated in a balanced manner, that permits inspection teams, in accordance with the agreed arrangements, to enter sensitive sites of a sovereign character or having a bearing on national security that the Special Commission believes to be relevant to its mandate.

Since the joint statement was signed, many sensitive sites have been inspected without friction. The letter dated 15 June 1997 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/465, annex) gives details of the visits made by the UNSCOM 182 and UNSCOM 194 inspection teams to 69 sites, the great majority of which were of a sensitive character. The two isolated incidents that occurred in special circumstances while the UNSCOM 194 team was at work cannot be interpreted as representing a pattern of obstruction on the part of Iraq.

In this connection, I should like to reaffirm Iraq's commitment to full cooperation with the Special Commission in performing its functions under the relevant Security Council resolutions and to reiterate that Iraq will comply fully with the joint statement and joint programme of action of 22 June 1996.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

97-16783 (E) 200697 200697